

# Chapter 1 .0

## Plan Introduction & Background

### Planning Context

The 1990 Washington State Growth Management Act, the Countywide Planning Policies of King County, and the City of Seattle Comprehensive Plan require local governments to pursue land use strategies that make greater use of existing urban areas to accommodate growth and reduce sprawl. These plans also place high priorities upon the efficient use of transportation infrastructure for people and goods, and promote affordable housing, economic development and opportunity, environmental stewardship, preservation of historic/cultural resources, citizen participation, and the protection of property rights.

The Countywide Planning Policies adopted for King County include Georgetown in the larger Duwamish Manufacturing/Industrial Center (M&I), one of four such centers in the county targeted for regional investment strategies to maintain and expand industrial employment. The City of Seattle Comprehensive Plan also recognizes Georgetown (excluding its residential-zoned enclaves) as an essential component of the Duwamish M&I Center. Both the regional and city plans require governments to use affirmative actions, such as new permitting processes, to facilitate redevelopment in existing urban areas and industrial centers.

The Seattle Comprehensive Plan also designates the Georgetown community as one of 25 neighborhood anchors that should serve as a focal point for community services and amenities, including connections to the regional public transit system. It should be noted that

there are no growth targets specific to any designated area in the Comprehensive Plan. The Plan requires that the designation must be reconsidered and evaluated as part of the neighborhood planning process. Through the course of neighborhood planning, the majority of Planning Committee members and the community-at-large through the Committee's outreach process, concluded that the neighborhood anchor designation should be permanent.

The adopted policies cited above apply to Georgetown in many different ways. It is an existing industrial employment center served by significant investment in public infrastructure. It provides ready access to multiple modes of transportation routes and facilities, including Interstate 5, Interstate 90, State Route 99, State Route 509, SeaTac International Airport, King County International Airport, and the Duwamish River. It stands out as a growing center for wholesale/distribution and design trade related employment. And it is in close proximity (just north) to the corporate headquarters, research, and manufacturing facilities of the Boeing Company.

With all of these factors going on around it, Georgetown also still remains home to an old, established residential community that has many dwellings predating the industrial development of the region. Residential uses are typically found in the designated neighborhood anchor area, but also in pockets in the industrial zones, principally near the Seattle Design Center. The residential areas of Georgetown provide the City of Seattle with affordable, in-city single-family housing, as well as other forms of affordable

living quarters, including live/work units in old historic warehouse lofts. The neighborhood has an active community council and a strong sense of identity. It is a positive example of many of the city's residential goals, such as encouraging cultural and economic diversity within a neighborhood, providing housing close to sources of employment, and honoring the inherent sense of place of one of Seattle's oldest and most unusual neighborhoods, where you find third and fourth generation residents, living next door to new immigrants.

Georgetown's historical character also has relevance to the adopted policy basis, especially as it relates to the City's new Cultural Resources element. Georgetown is the site of the first American non-native settlement in King County and is home to many historic buildings which function today in a wide variety of industrial, live/work, social service, and commercial uses. In addition, the Duwamish River remains a source of a major run of native salmon.

These and other community characteristics make the Georgetown neighborhood both an interesting challenge and ideal proving ground for the policies and goals set forth in the City of Seattle Comprehensive Plan.

## Community Outreach Efforts

In order to plan for the future, the Georgetown Planning Committee recognized that successful community involvement strategies and their implementation would be of paramount importance. Through the two phases of the neighborhood planning process, the Planning Committee, and its predecessor, the Georgetown Organizing Committee, engaged and informed the community about Georgetown neighborhood planning in many ways:

### Phase I

- Conducted a series of eleven focus groups with various community constituents, including small business and commercial services, commercial transportation industries, property and business owners, Seattle Design and Gift Center trades, manufacturing, assembly, and light industries, small industries, commercial retail services, maritime industries, Georgetown property owners, residential homeowners, and the residential renter community. In total more than 120 people participated in this outreach effort.
- Held two neighborhood planning workshops to gather input on priorities for the future. The two events attracted approximately 60 people for Georgetown's residential, commercial, and industrial sectors.
- Made presentations to various groups, including the Seattle Industrial Rotary Club, SODO Business Association, South Park Redevelopment Action Committee, and several local business owners.
- Mailed out a series of information brochures. Each time, the mailers were sent to over 1,700 households and business addresses, and 300 absentee property owners. The mailers included an introduction to neighborhood planning and a final findings report and validation mail-back piece to get endorsement on the vision and work plan. More than 100 people responded.

### Phase II

- Formed five subcommittees to deal with scope of work. In addition to the 13-member Planning Committee, approximately 10 to 15 other community members participated at the subcommittee level.

- Conducted outreach to the Seattle Design and Gift Center. The Planning Committee participated in two meetings sponsored by the Center to introduce neighborhood planning to trade members. About 25 to 30 people attended the meetings.
- Conducted economic development case study interviews with several local businesses to find out constraints to development, future plans, and issues/concerns. Twelve interviews were held with a range of representatives from commerce and industry, including Rainier Cold Storage, Hardie Gypsum, Swedish Home and Health Hospice (in Seattle Design Center), Colorado Steel Sash Company, Georgetown Pharmacy, Bartell Drugs Distribution Center, Kelly Moore/Preservative Paints, Art Forms Unlimited/Aaby's Gallery, Spieker Properties, Alki Restaurant Group, Pacific Rim Importers/Exporters, and Seattle Market Center.
- Participated in a Public Safety outreach effort to businesses sponsored by the Seattle Police Department. More than 50 people attended the meeting. In addition, Public Safety subcommittee members conducted a survey on crime prevention. Approximately 50 people completed the survey.
- As part of plan validation, held a series of three public forums to present plan recommendations. More than 80 people participated in the series.
- Mailed out a series of information brochures. Each time, the mailers were sent to over 1,700 households and business addresses, and 300 absentee property owners. The mailers were newsletters (The Georgetownner) designed to inform and gain input. The last mailer asked for community input on all 124 plan actions and recommendations formulated by the subcommittees. Approximately 170 opinion surveys were returned.

In addition to the outreach officially conducted by the Georgetown Planning Committee, some committee members outside of the planning process made other outreach efforts. This includes an April 1997 survey (135 respondents) and a December 1995 survey (191 respondents) published and sponsored by the Concerned Business & Property Owners of Georgetown. Appendix I provide more detail of these surveys.

## Vision Statement

To guide the Phase II neighborhood planning process, the Georgetown Planning Committee adopted the following vision statement as the principle from which recommendations would be developed, and residents and business interests would work together:

As Georgetown *plans* its future, we will work to maintain what we always *have* been: a strong, valuable manufacturing and *industrial* center that also includes the presence of an affordable, "in-city" residential community.

We will continue to maintain our *high-wage* manufacturing/distribution job base, and strengthen the transportation links *that* make Georgetown regionally and globally significant. We will also *preserve* and enhance the qualities and services of our *vibrant*, long-standing residential community.

We, the businesses, residents, and property owners of Georgetown, *will* work together and respect each other's concerns *in* order to maintain this *unique balance that defines our area*.

**As we *prepare* our plan, we *will create* opportunities for** existing businesses to grow, while also promoting investment *in new, "clean"* industries. We will *look* for opportunities to develop services and facilities that will enhance the quality of life of our residents. To support the needs of our entire community, we will seek ways to **attract** small business and commercial *services* that can *serve* everyone who *lives*, works, and *visits* Georgetown.